Case Study

Sandals Corporate University and the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute: Elevating People Through Education and Professional Development
Established in 1953 as the nonprofit education and training arm of the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA), the mission of the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI) is to be the preferred provider of quality resources to educate, develop, and certify hospitality students and professionals worldwide. AHLEI became part of the National Restaurant Association in 2017, connecting and leveraging the resources of two organizations that are deeply committed to a vision of career success and upward mobility for current and future hospitality, restaurant and foodservice employees.

For more than 60 years, we have provided hospitality education and training solutions to those preparing for hospitality careers as well as those already working in the industry. We have a clear vision of what the industry needs and how to prepare people to succeed in this vibrant field.

Leading hotel brands, management companies, hospitality schools, convention bureaus, individual properties, government agencies, and associations around the world turn to AHLEI for hospitality education and training resources and professional certification.

100+ international distributors, affiliates and licensed institutions in 60+ countries

16,500+ hotels and resorts currently use our training resources and certification programs globally

250,000+ hotel professionals currently hold a professional certification globally

2,000+ high schools, college and universities use our academic programs and supplemental materials globally

Many of our training programs feature portable, stackable, industry-recognized certifications that provide participants with tangible recognition for their skills and knowledge.

About This Case Study

This case study was written and edited by Elizabeth Johnson, marketing and communications manager, in collaboration with Ed Kastli, vice president of international sales. It was prepared using company information, statistics, and testimonials provided by Mark M.R. Frederick, registrar and vice principal of Sandals Corporate University. Graphic design was provided by Liz Watkins, interactive media designer.

Disclaimer: This case study is written solely for educational purposes and is not intended to represent successful or unsuccessful managerial decision making. The authors do not intend to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a workforce development and/or professional development situation.
February 9, 2017

Mr. Ed Kastli, MBA, CMHS, CGSP
Vice President, International Sales
American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute
800 N. Magnolia Avenue
Suite 300, Orlando FL 32803

Dear Ed,

Since the official launch of the Sandals Corporate University (SCU) in March 2012, we have enjoyed a fruitful and productive relationship with the American Hotel Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI).

Just a few months after the launch of the SCU, we signed the Global Academic Partner Agreement with the AHLEI, allowing us to tap into the vast array of AHLEI courses and to provide our team members with the opportunity to receive coveted AHLEI certification. As we approach the five year anniversary of this signing, we can truly say this partnership has impacted the lives of our team members in significant ways. Since October 2012, approximately 2,084 team members have received AHLEI certificates.

This partnership has also positioned Sandals as a leading authority in team member training and development in the hospitality industry and has further buoyed the company’s ability to invest in its human capital. Through our partnership with the AHLEI, one major highlight is that Beaches Turks and Caicos Resort Villages and Spa which has become the first resort in the Caribbean to achieve the Certified Guest Service Property designation, a truly coveted recognition highlighting the fact that all guest service contact employees have passed the Certified Guest Service Professional exam. Beaches Turks and Caicos now boast 310 Certified Guest Service Professionals with 36 team members receiving additional AHLEI professional certifications.

Sandals Resorts International and the Sandals Corporate University are indeed thankful for the partnership with the AHLEI and we have seen firsthand how this collaboration has benefitted our team members greatly. We look forward to continued partnership and to the opportunity to impact even more lives in the future.

Yours truly,

[Signature]
Adam Stewart
Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Sandals Corporate University History and Overview

With an ethos underpinned by the belief that there is no greater investment than the investment in its people, the Sandals Corporate University (SCU) was launched in March 2012 and remains committed to elevating the level of competency and proficiency of the 14,000 team members of Sandals, Beaches, and Grand Pineapple Resorts across the Caribbean.

The brain-child of senior Sandals Resorts International (SRI) executives, led by Deputy Chairman & Chief Executive Officer Adam Stewart, the SCU was created solely to provide team members with the opportunity to achieve their full potential by furthering their education and development through on-the-job training, scholarships, grants, and partnerships with world-renowned universities and colleges.

Sandals Corporate University was the first enterprise of its kind within the global hospitality industry. Since its launch, SCU has to date issued more than US$900,000 in direct scholarships, enabling team members to pursue courses from high school certification to post-graduate studies. Currently, team members have access to more than 230 courses and external partnerships with 13 top-ranking local and international universities and colleges, including the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI).
In order to maintain its dominance in the ever-evolving, fast-paced hospitality industry, Sandals Resorts International (SRI) has, for 35 years, persistently invested heavily in the training and development of its team members as a deliberate corporate strategy. With a staff complement of more than 14,000 team members, SRI is the largest single private employer in the Caribbean. To ensure the sustainability of the Caribbean tourism industry, the development of the hospitality workforce is key and this is a responsibility that SRI has not taken lightly. Additionally, with its rapid growth to 19 luxury all-inclusive resorts, and poised for even further growth, Sandals’ executives revisited, repurposed, and challenged its Training & Development Division to reinvent itself and to align with, plan, and support more aggressive corporate strategies.

The Training & Development Division evolved into the Sandals Corporate University (SCU). The SCU was launched simultaneously in March 2012 in the five Caribbean nations (now expanded to include Grenada and Barbados) in which Sandals and/or Beaches resorts operate.

SCU Roles and Responsibilities

The major role of SCU is to provide the opportunity for every Sandals team member to achieve his or her full potential in their chosen career through:

- Standardized, position-specific, competency-based training
- Standardized leadership and management development programs
- Facilitated training within the Resorts’ operational environment
- Appropriate financial and non-financial support
- Integration of earning and development achievements into the promotion and succession planning methodology

“After being in this industry for over 20 years, you take for granted that you know every aspect of the operation. Certified Administrator (CHA®) program has made me realize how much I still need to learn and that continuous development is necessary. It has allowed me to sharpen my leadership skills and overall ability to manage my talents and the various areas within the organization.

Christopher Elliott, CHA, General Manager, Sandals Halcyon
How is education and training disseminated throughout the organization?

SCU uses a centralized cascading model first developed by AHLEI for a large-scale training project in Egypt to deliver its products and services at its head office and resorts. This is reflected in Figure 1 below.

Because of the large number of team members who needed to be reached and because of the diverse skills that had to be taught, the cascading approach was and still is the best approach for SCU. All SCU executives at the head office who are involved in training, as well as the training and development managers on each resort, are required to be Certified Hospitality Educator (CHE®) certified.

SCU provides training and development services to the team members at the property level and in doing so, works closely with the division and department heads at the respective resorts to develop effective training solutions. To do this effectively, department heads are encouraged to become Certified Hospitality Department Trainers (CHDT®), which allows the department heads to oversee and become involved in their department training activities.

Within each department, supervisors are typically given the responsibility to deliver skills-based competency training to their peers and new hires, thereby reaching the masses.

Figure 1

This approach, supported by AHLEI’s training resources and AHA’s training-focus certifications (CHE® and CHDT®) has enabled Sandals to build its programs programs with effective, engaging and dynamic delivery by managers and supervisors. These managers and supervisors understand the issues of adult learning and can impact learners at their level and in their respective department environments.

“As a middle manager in the department, a major part of my core functions is to lead the team toward success. This requires investing in training and developing them as individuals. The CHDT® certification course assisted me greatly in learning exactly how to get the message to the team members, how to train using a method that best suits the team, and how to check for its effectiveness by following up and following through with their performance.”

Marvene Wright, CHDT, Housekeeping Supervisor, Sandals Royal Caribbean
Professional Certification for All Staff Levels

Certified Hotel Administrator (CHA®) is the most prestigious professional designation for a hotel general manager or executive. Those who earn this certification have demonstrated mastery of seven key areas: financial management, F&B management, human resources, leadership, marketing and sales, revenue management, and rooms management.

Certified Hospitality Educator (CHE®) is the only professional certification for post-secondary hospitality instructors. Through an in-person workshop and additional study resources, candidates explore traditional and innovative teaching techniques, adult learning styles, and strategies to enhance student learning and performance.

Certified Hospitality Trainer (CHT®) recognizes and validates the knowledge and skills of training directors and executives at the property and corporate level. Successful candidates demonstrate mastery of training concepts including instructional design, assessing training needs, measuring and evaluating training, and mentoring.

Certified Hospitality Department Trainer (CHDT®) can be earned by department trainers who complete AHLEI’s Trainer Development Program. Those with this designation have shown an understanding of individual and group training, adult learning styles, e-learning, communication skills, orientation, and functional skills training.

Certified Hospitality Supervisor (CHS®) validates the skills and knowledge of those employees who supervise others in their departments. AHLEI’s Supervisory Skill Builders (SSB) training prepares employees for the CHS® exam, with hospitality-specific content on topics including interviewing, hiring, orientation, scheduling, employee discipline, performance reviews, and resolving conflicts.

Line-Level Training and Certification brings the professional clout of AHLA’s certifications to employees who are on the front lines with guests. AHLEI offers designations for those who work in food and beverage, guest service, front desk, housekeeping, and maintenance positions. Training content covers all-employee knowledge, job-specific knowledge, and task breakdowns, with an exam to validate mastery.
Accomplishments Under the Partnership

The AHLEI partnership and their programs continue to be a vital part of SCU offerings to their team members.

Total intervention (March 2012 to December 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th># CERTIFIED</th>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
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<td>2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>224</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,758*</td>
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*includes 34 academic courses completed during the period 2012 to 2016

CHE® Workshops Conducted at Sandals

Because the CHE® is the standard required for their senior trainers, SCU has hosted three (3) CHE® workshops since 2012, with the most recent held in 2016.

<table>
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<th>YEAR</th>
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<td>2013</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>26</td>
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Sandals Resorts International has the distinction of having more trainers certified as CHES than any other resort chain in the world. In addition, the first CHE Master Trainer in the Caribbean is employed by Sandals.

“The CHE® training was very energizing, bringing lots of ideas, with both substantial and in-depth knowledge together with case studies, learning from experience and being fully practice-oriented. It allowed me to view adult learning from a different angle, which also enabled me to look at my role as Training & Development Manager in a more clinical sense. I would encourage all hospitality trainers to complete the Certified Hospitality Educator course with AHLEI. The wealth of knowledge and the method of delivery enable persons to walk away with a new sense of how to engage your talent to bring about increased customer loyalty.”

Glaister Williams, CHE, Training and Development Manager, Sandals Barbados Resort & Spa
Sandals – Professional Certifications Other Than CHE®

American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) professional certifications administered through AHLEI, are a favorite of Sandals’ team members working in supervisor and line-level positions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>DEPT. HEAD</th>
<th>MANAGERIAL</th>
<th>SUPERVISOR</th>
<th>LINE</th>
<th>SPECIALTY</th>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>2013</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>115</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>1308</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1724</td>
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</table>

*does not include the 34 academic courses completed during the period 2012 to 2016

Sandals – GAP license in 2012

Sandals Resorts International has been a proud partner of AHLEI for many years. In 2012, because of the focus of SCU, that business relationship was formalized through a Global Academic Partnership (GAP) agreement, which has yielded significant benefits at the property and corporate levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>ACADEMIC COURSES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“I am a proud holder of a CHS® certification. As a Restaurant Supervisor, the knowledge I gained helped me execute my job more effectively. I have had instances where the information contained in all modules has been applicable. I cannot fully express how valuable the CHS course can be to a supervisor. I have excelled in my position. I have received much more recognition and praise from my managers. I was recently selected to act as a Senior Restaurant Manager in the absence of one of my superiors.”

Diana Durancy, CHS, Restaurant Supervisor, Sandals Grande St. Lucian Spa and Beach Resort
“Completing the Certified Guest Service Professional (CGSP®) course honestly had me reevaluate my thoughts and actions as customer service representative. I became more thorough with tasks and gained the importance of being proactive. With all of this, I became a true Sandals professional and recently gained a promotion from Resort Shop Attendant to Club Sandals Concierge Agent.”

Tavia Surgeon-Joseph, GSSP, Club Sandals Agent, Sandals Grande Antigua Resort & Spa

Sandals began using AHLEI’s Guest Service Gold: Making Connections training, leading to the Certified Guest Service Professional (CGSP) designation, in 2014. This program focuses on instilling guest-facing team members with knowledge of key guest service traits that are essential for delivering outstanding service to all guests.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th># CERTIFICATES</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>73</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,203</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coming out of this program in 2014, Beaches Turks & Caicos Resort was the first resort in the Caribbean to be awarded the Certified Guest Service Property designation.

SCU’S Vision for the Caribbean

As the largest private employer in the Caribbean, the vision of SRI and SCU is to provide significant opportunities for the Caribbean’s hospitality professionals to develop themselves. This will positively impact the efficiency and effectiveness of the resorts they serve, which translates into the delivery of exceptional experiences to their guests.
In February 2014, Beaches Turks & Caicos, an SRI property, became the first resort in the Caribbean to earn the designation of Certified Guest Service Property. It was only the 23rd property in the world to earn this title, which is bestowed by AHLEI upon properties who have certified all their guest-facing employees as Certified Guest Service Professionals (CGSP®).

To earn the designation, Beaches Turks & Caicos trained team members with AHLEI’s Guest Service Gold®: Making Connections, followed by the CGSP® exam. More than 300 team members earned the professional certification to qualify the resort as a Certified Guest Service Property.

At an awards ceremony and graduation hosted by the property, AHLEI senior staff presented the certificates and pins for the CGSP®, as well as 36 other AHLA certifications, and 469 SCU certificates.
Dr. Phillip Brown, CHE, Sandals Corporate University, and Dr. Samer Hassan, CHE, Johnson & Wales University, each received AHLEI’s Lamp of Knowledge Award (for International and U.S. Educator, respectively), in large part for their work training and certifying Sandals employees.

February 26, 2017

Mr. Ed Kastli, MBA, CMHS, CGSP
Vice President, International Sales
American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute
800 N Magnolia Avenue
Suite 300, Orlando Fl. 32803

Dear Mr. Kastli,

We have always prided ourselves on having the best workforce in the Caribbean and because of them we have continued our commitment to excellence, thereby earning the title of “Caribbean’s Leading Hotel Brand,” for 23 consecutive years. With that in mind, we decided that we should in turn make a commitment to these wonderful individuals and invest in their future. In making that decision, Sandals Corporate University (SCU) was launched in March 2012.

We have grown tremendously, partnering with several institutions along the way; namely AHLEI with whom we signed the Global Academic Partner Agreement. This allowed us to offer even more certification courses specifically geared to the educational development of several of our Team Members.

The Team Members have improved their lives both personally and professionally which has positively impacted their work ethic and overall attitudinal approach in their job functions. Through AHLEI, I achieved the honour of being the first Master Trainer in the Caribbean, along with gaining my certification as a Certified Hospitality Educator (CHE). I am extremely proud of these accomplishments, as together, they have afforded me the opportunity of enhancing my skill set, which enables me to serve my company better and touch the lives of our Team Members.

Our alliance has aided in our having one of the most coveted training and development initiative in the Caribbean. It has been a pleasure to work with you and your team.

Best Regards,

Phillip Brown
Group Director,
SCU & Training Standards

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